

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

December 11, 2017

The Honorable Ken Calvert  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment  
And Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations

The Honorable Betty McCollum  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment  
And Related Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations

RE: Request for Staffing and Operations Funding for Newly Constructed Tribal Health Clinics

Dear Mr. Calvert and Ms. McCollum,

We write to request that you correct the failure of the federal Indian Health Service to seek adequate funding for the staffing and operations of newly constructed health care facilities that are scheduled to open during Fiscal Year 2018.

We became aware of this failure by the Indian Health Service over the past few months when constituents informed us that they were told by the Agency that staffing and operations funding for three health facilities scheduled to open in the next year was not included in the Agency's budget request to Congress for FY 2018. Two of these facilities (Red Tail Hawk Health Center in Arizona and the Fort Yuma Health Center in California) will provide services to Native Americans in Arizona. A third facility will serve Native Americans in Oklahoma. The Indian Health Service has been aware of the construction of these facilities and of their scheduled completion during FY 2018 for several years. Federal funds were used to construct two of the facilities, and tribal funds were used to construct the third under the condition that the Indian Health Service would provide staffing and operations funding once the facility was constructed. The Red Tail Hawk Health Center is now constructed, and it received its final inspection from the Indian Health Service in late October and its certificate of beneficial occupancy in early November. Due to the failure of the Indian Health Service the facility has no funds to begin staffing, and it will sit empty until Congress provides funding to correct this error.

It is bad federal policy and an inefficient use of federal dollars to construct these health facilities and then leave them vacant. The Indian Health Service failed to adequately inform Congress of the amount of funds needed to ensure that they are timely and efficiently staffed and operated.

We hope that you can look into this matter and work to ensure that these facilities receive the necessary funding to open and start serving our Native American constituents in a timely manner.

Sincerely,



Tom O'Halleran  
Member of Congress



Paul A. Gosar  
Member of Congress



Andy Biggs  
Member of Congress



David Schweikert  
Member of Congress



Ruben Gallego  
Member of Congress



Kyrsten Sinema  
Member of Congress